DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 147 447 CE 011 610

TITLE	Data-Based Locally Directed Evaluation of Vocational Education Programs. Component 1. Organizing for DBLDE.
INSTITUTION	Florida State Univ., Tallahassee. Program of Vocational Education.
SPONS AGENCY	Florida State Dept. of Education, Tallahassee. Div. of Vocational Education.
BUREAU NO	C7-002
PUB DATE	Jul 77
NOTE	32p.; For related documents see CE 011 608-617
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Guides; County School Systems; *Evaluation Methods; Guidelines; *Objectives; Organization; *Planning; Post Secondary Education; *Program Evaluation; *School Districts; Secondary Education; State Programs; Summative Evaluation; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	Florida

ABSTRACT

Part of a system by which local education agency (LEA) personnel may evaluate secondary and postsecondary vocational education programs, this first of eight components focuses on organization of the evaluation plan. As in each of the other components, methods and procedures are suggested that the LEA may adopt or modify when developing a system unique to its specific evaluation needs. Emphasis is placed on the roles of the local education agency administration and evaluation team. Procedures covered include selection of a local coordinator, defining the purpose and scope of the evaluation, establishing the evaluation team, selecting the name members of the team, conducting the evaluation, and the report. Appendixes contain example purpose statements, a sample calendar of events for the evaluation, and a brief bibliography and glossary. (The other seven components and an overview guide, CE 011 609, are available separately.) (JT)

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COMPONENT 1

ORGANIZING FOR DBLDE

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DATA-BASED LOCALLY DIRECTED EVALUATION

OE 011 610

DATA-BASED LOCALLY DIRECTED EVALUATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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July 1977

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COMPONENT ONE

ORGANIZING FOR DATA-BASED LOCALLY DIRECTED EVALUATION

(DBLDE)

I. Overview

By definition, Data-Based Locally Directed Evaluation (DBLDE) denotes the collection of information for the purpose of determining the value or worth of the local educational program. There is no one best way to conduct a local evaluation. A system designed and utilized by one Local Education Agency (LEA) may provide excellent results for that particular LEA, but may fall far short of satisfying the evaluation needs of another LEA, or vice versa. Byram (1970) has indicated, however, that there are a number of elements of central importance that appear repeatedly in effective systems of local evaluation. He identifies the fundamental elements of DBLDE as:

. . A firm local commitment to evaluation;

. . A concerned and well-trained local evaluation team;

. . An effective staff steering committee;

. . An active citizens advisory committee;

. . Allocation of adequate time and monetary support for evaluation activities;

. . Well-informed publics; and

. . Competent consultants.

Any attempt at local evaluation will certainly fail unless there exists firm commitment by the local administrative

unit and by the individuals responsible for formulating local education policy. Consequently, the commitment to evaluation must be more than a simple endorsement of the evaluation concept or cursory approval of evaluation activities. Policy makers and administrative personnel must confirm their commitment to local evaluation by providing adequate released time to the local evaluation team members and adequate financial support for the conduct of the evaluation activities.

The identification and utilization of a concerned, well-trained evaluation team is of prime importance. Competent leadership should be drawn from the LEA which is conducting the local evaluation. In some LEAs, the responsibility for evaluation leadership has been vested in the local director of vocational education or an individual from the vocational supervisory or instructional staff. Other LEAs have been successful in recruiting leadership from the ranks of the general administration. The primary concern here is that the individual who assumes leadership responsibility should be dedicated to the concept of evaluation and should possess a genuine interest in the improvement of vocational education offerings. The membership of the evaluation team should be voluntary, when possible, and should include individuals with expertise in the area(s) to be evaluated. It may also be desirable to insure that at least one team member is trained in research and data processing procedures.

A staff steering committee should be appointed from each LEA to provide overall direction and guidance to its local

evaluation team. For maximum effectiveness, this committee should include representatives from the local administrative unit, staff, and vocational faculty. The selection of faculty from outside vocational education should also be seriously considered. Their experiences provide a base for valuable input into the vocational evaluation process, especially when reviewing educational philosophy and/or determining local educational goals and objectives.

Since vocational education programs exist for the express purpose of serving the needs of the students and the community, it follows that procedures should be established for obtaining input from citizens who represent the various segments of the community. Local education agencies normally accomplish this by forming and utilizing a Citizens Advisory Committee. The complement of the advisory committee varies depending on the purpose(s) for which it is formed. When the advisory committee's responsibility is to focus on a limited evaluation task, the LDE team or evaluation team may choose to establish an ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee is normally composed of from five to nine members. They serve only to address a specific problem or provide advice for the current task. If the scope of the evaluation is broad, the LDE team or evaluation team may wish to enlist the services of an existing General Advisory Committee or specific Craft (occupational) Advisory Committee. The

membership of these standing committees possesses the expertise to offer advice relative to the total vocational program.

Regardless of the type of advisory committee used, the selection of its members is a responsibility of the LEA and should be dependent upon each individual's:

- . . Interest in the local education system;
- . . willingness to work with the institution;
- . . time available to participate in evaluation activities;
- . . knowledge of community educational needs;
- . . knowledge of the specific area to be evaluated; and
- . . understanding of the goals, desires, and needs of students within the community.

Continuous evaluation, such as that undertaken through DBLDE, requires constant contact with the various publics served by the LEA. Therefore, it is essential that steps be taken to keep these publics well-informed of the purpose, progress, and results of local evaluation activities. The Citizens Advisory Committee is one vehicle by which the LEA may provide evaluation feedback to its publics, another is through the timely use of existing media such as the local newspaper(s) and radio and television stations. Still another vehicle is through appropriate presentations to local civic, professional, business and labor organizations. A well-planned combination of these methods will assure the

LEA of well-informed publics.

There may be occasions when the LDE team will seek the assistance of consultants to help overcome a specific problem, or offer advice or suggestions regarding DBLDE activities. There are a number of sources from which the LDE team may obtain consultative services. Some of those more frequently used are:

. . Universities with vocational teacher preparation programs;

. . local or regional offices of appropriate federal agencies;

. . central or regional offices of the Florida Department of Education;

. . local business and industry; and

. . professional consulting service agencies.

Regardless of the source from which consultative services are obtained, the qualifications or credentials of the prospective consultant should be throughly examined to insure that only competent consultants are retained.

The incentive for local evaluation may stem from any of a number of sources. It may be the result of: (1) Unmet student needs, (2) public demand for accountability, (3) the desire of the local administration, (4) initiative from the Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education, (5) the needs of a particular instructor,

(6) Florida legislative mandate, or (7) a combination of those incentives. Regardless of the source, the local education agency personnel must consider the fundamental elements of local evaluation when planning for and organizing a program of data-based locally directed evaluation.

II. Suggested Procedures

Procedures that have been successfully tested and implemented form a base from which local education agencies can develop a systematic approach to local evaluation. The suggested procedures which follow are drawn from a number of such models and presume that local administrative personnel and the school staff are firmly committed to the evaluation effort. The procedures are intended only as a guide for local education agencies personnel to use when organizing activities unique to their particular evaluation needs.

Select a Local Coordinator for Evaluation

After the decision has been made to develop a local evaluation system and to launch an on-going evaluation program, the local education agency personnel will need to select an individual to coordinate the various activities involved in the evaluation. As previously stated, the individual selected to coordinate the local effort must foster a strong desire to improve instruction through the evaluation process. For maximum effectiveness, the successful coordinator candidate should: (1) be drawn from the local education agency, (2) be respected by his fellow faculty, staff, and administrators, (3) have a basic understanding of evaluation techniques and methodology.

Method of selection. The method most frequently used to identify candidates from which a local coordinator will be selected is through the recommendations of local supervisory

or administrative personnel. Most administrators and supervisors have long tenure within the local system, and, therefore are well qualified to offer recommendations concerning important personnel assignments. In the event a well-qualified individual is not immediately known, it may be necessary to search personnel records or interview the faculty and staff to identify prospective candidates. If the records search or faculty interviews are unproductive, it may then be necessary to seek a qualified candidate from outside the local education agency. It should be noted, however, that this alternative should be exercised only when it is impossible to locate a qualified candidate within the local education system.

Confirmation. The selected coordinator should be confirmed by a letter from the chief administrator, the chairperson of the local board, or another individual in a position of authority. The letter should pledge or imply that adequate financial and staff support for the evaluation activity will be made available. It should also indicate that released time necessary to carry out the evaluation activities will be provided the coordinator in the event he/she is selected from the teaching or administrative ranks of the LEA.

Define the Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

Prior to selecting the evaluation coordinator, the LEA should have determined that a need for DBLDE exists, have

established the general purpose of the evaluation, and have given some indication as to the scope of the evaluation activities to be undertaken. Soon after the coordinator is named, the coordinator should meet with the administration to prepare a statement of purpose and to establish the limits of the evaluation effort.

Statement of purpose. The statement of purpose is perhaps the one most important step toward gaining faculty and staff support for the evaluation. Teachers, in particular, tend to view evaluation as a threat. To many, it becomes singularly personal, threatening their security, professional ability, or credibility. The statement of purpose, therefore, should alleviate any fear by emphasizing that the evaluation is designed specifically to improve the instructional program. This statement should offer assurance that the results are not to be used for the purpose of discipline, consideration for continuing contract, promotion, pay increases, or other administrative purposes. Example purpose statements are included as Appendix A.

Determine the scope of the evaluation. Before Data-Based Locally Directed Evaluation can be undertaken, the scope of the evaluation activities must be determined. The coordinator of evaluation in cooperation with the local education administration should establish specific objectives. The scope of the evaluation will depend largely on the established objectives. For example, if an objective is to

collect data from which the local education agency can answer all questions generated by the state-directed review of vocational education instructional programs, then the scope of the evaluation would necessarily encompass all activities suggested in the various components of the data-based locally directed evaluation system. If, on the other hand, an objective is to determine the occupational competence of individuals leaving or graduating from a small engine repair program, the scope of the evaluation may be limited to the activities suggested in component VI. "Evaluation of Occupational Competence."

The scope of the evaluation will determine the resources needed for conducting the evaluation. The first example given above implies the expenditure of considerable time, money, and human effort, while the second example requires only limited resources. The first example also implies extensive planning, whereas planning for the second might be accomplished by a single individual or a committee of two or three. If the scope of the evaluation is to be extensive, the LEA may wish to form a steering committee to assist in planning for the evaluation.

Establish the Evaluation Team

The number of individuals representing the evaluation team may vary depending upon the local situation. For example, the evaluation team for a multi-attendance vocational center administered by a secondary school district or a

community college may include:

. the coordinator of evaluation,

. the local vocational director or occupational dean,

. several departmental chairpersons,

. several vocational instructors, and

. the chairperson of the general advisory committee.

Whereas, a smaller institution such as a comprehensive high school may establish a steering committee made up of:

. the coordinator of evaluation,

. the local vocational director or principal,

. an instructor,

. a departmental chairperson, and

. a craft committee member.

The size and composition of the evaluation team are important considerations. The team should not be so large as to be unwieldy nor so small as to be unrepresentative.

Select and Name Members of the Evaluation Team

The coordinator of evaluation should present a list of nominees to the local administrator for screening. After screening, some informal or unofficial inquiry may be made to ascertain willingness to serve. Persons selected, when outside the local institution (advisory committee member(s)) should receive official notification of their selection, preferably by a letter from the administration (superintendent, president of community college, etc.). Personal contact by the coordinator of evaluation may help to start the evaluation

team on a positive note.

After the members of the evaluation team have accepted their appointments, they should formally organize. The committee chairman and vice-chairman should be elected from the ranks of the committee. A part of the organizational process may include outlining the duties and responsibilities of the evaluation team.

Outline duties and responsibilities. The purpose and need for the evaluation team, the approximate length of time needed to complete responsibilities, and explicit duties of members should be thoroughly explained by the coordinator of evaluation. It should be noted that the primary responsibility of the evaluation team is to organize and conduct the local evaluation.

The conduct of the evaluation depends upon the evaluation teams' understanding of the DBLDE activities. Thus, the evaluation team members should become familiar with each component of the DBLDE system. Perhaps a meeting or a number of meetings called by the evaluation coordinator to discuss each component would be well advised.

When each evaluation team member is confident in his/her understanding of the DBLDE system, other duties of the evaluation team should be assigned. In consultation and cooperation with the local administration the evaluation coordinator should assure that a good public relations program is established. The purpose of public relations is

to obtain the cooperation of all institutional segments in conducting the evaluation. Selected members of the evaluation team may be chosen by the coordinator for the public relations activity.

Depending on the local situation and the size of a given LEA, the evaluation coordinator may assign sub-teams the responsibility of conducting specific evaluative activities of the DBLDE system (i.e., one sub-team may be assigned facilities evaluation and another may be assigned evaluation of occuaptional competencies). Evaluation assignments should be made based on members' expertise to contribute to the specific items in the given component.

The DBLDE system addresses evaluation as a continuous process. Thus, it is important that the evaluation team establish a proposed calendar of events for the entire school year. The calendar of events should include a time schedule for the specific events associated with each component of the evaluation. The sample calendar of events is shown as Appendix B.

Conducting the Evaluation

Before the total evaluation team or sub-team within the evaluation team conducts an evaluation of any of the specific components of the DBLDE system, the members should meet with department personnel to discuss and review the purpose of the evaluation. The following questions should be discussed in detail:

1. Why are we involved in evaluation?
2. What can evaluation do for us?

Departmental personnel should be involved in evaluation of specific components. These persons may have appropriate data on file to address specific questions in the evaluation process (e.g., periodic evaluation and review of the local fire marshal regarding the safety and adequacy of facilities and equipment).

When it is necessary to employ a group of technical consultants from outside the LEA for conducting specific activities of the evaluation system, e.g., facilities and equipment evaluation, the group of consultants should be briefed on the scope of the entire evaluation.

The evaluation team, under the supervision and coordination of the evaluation coordinator, should decide on the processes which are to be involved in the evaluation. For example, they need to decide whether individual programs within departments will be evaluated separately, or whether a more comprehensive evaluation will be made of an entire department.

Each component of DBLDE has a detailed breakdown of procedures and sample instrumentation for the LDE team to utilize in conducting the evaluation. These procedures have been written in simplified language, and require a minimum of study and research to follow. The evaluation team may wish to follow the evaluation procedures outlined in each component,

or develop procedures which are unique and appropriate to a given LEA.

The techniques for evaluation of specific components vary depending on the type of activities associated with that particular component. For example, to conduct a facilities and equipment evaluation, the evaluation team may be required to conduct visual inspections of laboratories, facilities and equipment, whereas, an evaluation of budget policy may require that the evaluation team work closely with the administration and the business and budget office. Similarly, an evaluation of occupational competence may require the team to work with instructors and students in a classroom or laboratory setting.

Evaluation Reports

Upon the completion of the evaluation of specific components of DBLDE, data should be collected by the team and forwarded to the evaluation coordinator. In turn, the evaluation coordinator should assume the responsibility for preparing the final evaluation report for submission to the local administration. A copy of the evaluation report should be kept on file in the administrative offices of the local education agency for reference when preparing the annual district report.

Instrumentation included in each DBLDE component may be reproduced for ease in reporting the results of the evaluation. If each component of DBLDE is evaluated separately, and all components are scheduled throughout the

school year, the evaluation coordinator will likely wish to keep each component report on file so that a formalized report covering the entire evaluation may be written with relative ease.

III. Using Evaluation Data

It may be noted that the key feature of DBLDE is the comparison between "what is" and "what should be" in terms of vocational instruction. The evaluation report may point out discrepancies which exist so that the local administration may address these discrepancies in future planning for specific programs. In this regard, recommendations may be made to alleviate any discrepancies found by allocating additional funds to correct discrepancies.

IV. Summary

Federal and State mandates require that vocational education programs be continuously evaluated for efficiency and effectiveness of instruction to assure the maximum return for investment of the tax payers' dollars. DBLDE is one vehicle by which the local education agency may continuously evaluate its training program to assure maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

The procedures outlined in this section are intended to help the LEA organize for data-based locally directed evaluation. A breakdown of major activities associated with organizing for DBLDE is as follows:

1.0 Determine the need for DBLDE.
- 1.1 Establish general purpose of evaluation.
  - 1.1.1 Indicate scope of evaluation activities.

2.0 Select local evaluation coordinator.
- 2.1 Seek recommendations of administrative and supervisory personnel.
- 2.2 Search personnel records.
- 2.3 Identify prospective candidates.
  - 2.3.1 Interview prospective candidates.
- 2.4 Send person chosen a confirmation letter.

3.0 Draw up statement of purpose for evaluation.
- 3.1 Meet with administration, faculty, students, and staff.

4.0 Determine scope of evaluation.

4.1 Establish specific objectives of evaluation.

4.1.1 Outline and detail objectives.

4.2 Review resources available for evaluation.

4.2.1 Recommend additional resources as needed.

4.3 Establish evaluation steering committee.

5.0 Establish evaluation team.

5.1 Consider LEA composition and personnel available.

5.1.1 Review evaluative expertise of faculty and community representatives.

5.2 Select and name members of evaluation team.

5.2.1 Present a list of prospective members to administration for screening.

5.2.2 Ascertain willingness of prospective members to serve on the evaluation team.

5.2.3 Choose members and notify each of his/her appointment.

5.3 Elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson for evaluative activities of the team.

6.0 Outline duties and responsibilities.

6.1 Explain the purpose and need for the evaluation team.

6.2 Determine time needed to complete responsibilities.

6.3 Explain duties of specific team members.

6.4 Organize evaluation team into sub-teams or whatever format is suitable.

6.5 Assure each member is familiar with each component of the DBLDE system.

6.6 Establish good public relations program.

6.7 Establish calendar of evaluation events.

7.0 Conduct the evaluation.

7.1 Meet with department administrators and teachers.

7.1.1 Discuss purpose of evaluation.

7.1.2 Obtain evaluation information from departmental personnel.

7.2 Determine processes which will be involved in the evaluation.

7.3 Utilize instrumentation useful to each DBLDE component.

7.3.1 Follow through on the procedure given in each component in order to conduct the evaluation.

7.3.1.1 Conduct visual inspection.

7.3.1.2 Consult administration and business office.

7.3.1.3 Consult instructors and students.

7.4 Collect the data and complete the evaluation.

8.0 Prepare evaluation report.

8.1 Forward evaluation data collected to the evaluation coordinator.

8.2 Prepare evaluation report of each component.

8.3 Prepare evaluation report of entire evaluation.

8.4 Submit report to administration.

8.5 Keep report on file for future reference.

V. Sample Evaluation Materials

	Appendix
Example Purpose Statements	A
Sample Calendar of Events for DBLDE	B

APPENDIX A

EXAMPLE PURPOSE STATEMENTS

The purpose of the evaluation system is:

- To determine what aspects of the total vocational program need improvement.
- To analyze the program to determine needed curriculum content revisions.
- To survey vocational program graduates concerning their impressions of the program that they completed.
- To determine staff inservice needed for program improvement.
- To gather sufficient data to adequately address standards for vocational education's instructional program review.
- To assess occupational training program output in light of community occupational needs.
- To provide sufficient data to aid the instructional and administrative staff as well as the board of control in decision making functions.
- To gather sufficient data to inform the public regarding outcomes of vocational education.
- To aid in identifying areas which need expansion within vocational education offerings.
- To determine what aspects of programs need the greatest allocation of resources for improvement.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR DBLDE

Month	Activity
August	1. Preliminary orientation of administration.
	2. Determine need for DBLDE and establish general purpose of evaluation.
	3. Select evaluation steering committee.
	4. Select local evaluation coordinator.
September	1. Establish specific objectives of evaluation.
	2. Hold faculty meeting for discussion of departmental evaluation and overall philosophy of evaluation.
	3. Select evaluation team.
October	1. Confirm evaluation team appointments
	2. Prepare notices for evaluation team meeting.
	3. Conduct orientation and organizational meeting of evaluation team.
	4. Review and become familiar with all DBLDE materials.
November	1. Evaluation team meeting to formulate evaluation plans.
	2. Priortize DBLDE components for evaluation during remainder of school year.
	3. Prepare for evaluation.
	4. Select two components for evaluation.
	5. Coordinate evaluation plans with departmental personnel.
December	1. Select consultants to participate in evaluation activities (if necessary).
	2. Conduct evaluation.

APPENDIX B - 2

Month		Activity
December (contd.)		
	3.	Evaluation team meeting to assemble and analyze data.
	4.	Select two additional components for evaluation.
January	1.	Prepare preliminary draft report of December evaluation.
	2.	Conduct evaluations.
	3.	Analyze data and findings.
	4.	Joint meeting of evaluation team, personnel, steering committee, and administration to discuss preliminary results of evaluation to date.
February	1.	Prepare preliminary draft report of January evaluations.
	2.	Select two additional components for evaluation.
	3.	Conduct evaluations.
	4.	Analyze data and findings.
March	1.	Prepare preliminary draft report of February evaluations.
	2.	Select final components for evaluation.
	3.	Conduct evaluations.
	4.	Analyze data and findings.
April	1.	Prepare preliminary draft report of March evaluations.
	2.	Meeting with administration to discuss complete evaluation data.
	3.	Wrap-up of evaluations including pending activities.
May	1.	Formulate recommendations resulting from evaluation.

APPENDIX B - 3

Month	Activity
May (contd.)	
	2. Plan for implementation of evaluation recommendations.
	3. Present recommendations to administration.
	4. Promote and aid implementation activities.
June	1. Prepare evaluation final report.
	2. Follow-up on evaluation recommendations.

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Glossary

Ad Hoc Committee: a committee appointed to study a specific situation or case. The committee is usually dissolved upon completion of the given task.

Citizens Advisory Committee: a group of persons outside the educational profession chosen to provide advice regarding a school program.

Craft/Occupational Advisory Committee: a group of local craftsmen/women selected for a specific trade or occupation, appointed to advise the county/school/instructor on matters pertaining to teaching the particular occupation.

General Advisory Committee: a group of persons outside the educational profession chosen to advise regarding the entire vocational program offered by the local education agency.

LEA (Local Education Agency): the local school district, the local community college district, or other institutions with educational responsibilities.

Publics: taxpayers, parents, students, local business and industrial community, the school board/community college trustees.

Steering Committee: a committee generally representative of the various interests involved and responsible for the over-all determination and, sometimes, implementation of policies in regard to a project or activity